**Sinking railway lines near coal mines**

†5571. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether railway-lines over-passing/passing around certain coal mines in Bihar are constantly sinking into the earth;

(b) if so, what are such locations;

(c) what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) what steps are being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS (DR.(SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): (a) to (d) It has been reported by Coal India that no incidence of subsidence causing sinking of railway lines passing over/around coal mines under command area of BCCL, CCL and ECL in the State of Bihar has come to their knowledge. However, following railway lines are likely to be affected due to the existence of fire for more than 30 years in the surrounding areas (Pre-Nationalisation):—

(i) Dhanbad-Chandrapura Chord Line (Eastern Railway)

(ii) Dhanbad-Patherdin-Sudamdih Railway Line (Eastern Rly)

(iii) Adra-Gomoh Railway Line (South Eastern Railway)

BCCL has taken several actions to control the fires and protect the railway lines. The magnitude of the problem is, however, quite complex.

The details of action taken by BCCL to protect the railway lines are as under:—

*1. Dhanbad-Chandrapura chord line (Eastern Rly)*

(a) At Bassuriya and Bansjora isolation trenches have been cut to isolate the fire for protection of railway line.

(b) At Bansjora surface sealing has been done to retard the progress of fire towards railway line.

(c) At Khas Kusunda a scheme to stabilise the Kusunda yard at an estimated cost of Rs. 49.63 lakhs is under implementation.

†Original notice of question was received in Hindi.

*2. Dhanbad-Patherdih-Sudamdih railway line (Eastern Rly)*

(a) At Lodna isolation trench and cement grouting through boreholes have been done to protect the track.

(b) At Bagdigi and Bararee mines isolation trench and blanketing with Matti have been done as preventive measures against advance of fire.

(c) At Lodna-south Lodna fire, a scheme to deal with fires which will protect the railway line is under implementation at an estimated cost of Rs 3.34 crores.

(d) At Sudamdih eastern edge XI/XII, XIV/XIVA seams have been blanketed to control the fire advancing towards the railway track.

*(3) Adra-Gomoh Railway Line (S.E Rly)*

(i) At Gopulichak Colliery isolation trench upto XVI seam floor has been made in addition to the surface sealing to control the progress of fire.

**Target Utilisation of Pots of Smeltor Plant, Angul**

5572. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state what are the reasons for which the NALCO would not achieve the target of utilising of all 480 pots of Smeltor Plant of Angul till March, 2000?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS (DR.(SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): NALCO could not utilise all of its 480 pots in the Smeltor Plant at Angul earlier to March, 2000 because of various factors: a shortage of power, till the 6th unit of the captive power plant was commissioned in 1994; constraints in the anode plant, till the debottlenecking in the carbon plant was completed during 1996-97. Over the years, more pots were brought into operation as NALCO improved its capacity to handle huge quantity of hot metal by addition of its billet, sow and strip casting facilities.

**Revision of Rates of Royalty on Lignite**

5573. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Gujarat have represented to streamline the existing system of fising rates of royalty;

(b) if so, whether the Central Government propose for setting up of a statutory body of experts for revision of rates of royalty; and